

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is preparing a habitat conservation plan (HCP) for the management of state-owned aquatic lands.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) request your input on alternatives to be considered in an environmental impact statement (EIS) being prepared to analyze the effects of DNR's proposed action and several alternatives.

What are aquatic lands?

Aquatic lands include tidelands and shorelands, as well as beds of rivers, lakes, and marine waters. Nearly all bedlands, about 30 percent of tidelands, and about 70 percent of shorelands of navigable lakes and rivers in Washington are under state ownership. Washington DNR manages about 2.4 million acres of state-owned aquatic lands statewide.



Photo: C. Cloen

How does DNR manage aquatic lands?

DNR's mission is to manage aquatic lands for current and future citizens of the state; to sustain long-term ecosystem and economic viability; and to ensure access to the aquatic lands and the benefits derived from them. DNR authorizes a wide variety of activities undertaken by individuals, businesses, and government entities on state-owned aquatic lands. Examples of authorized activities include small-scale mining, public access, and aquaculture of shellfish and finfish.

What is an HCP and why is DNR preparing one?

Under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), a non-federal entity may apply for a permit to conduct otherwise lawful activities that might result in harassment, harm, or other impacts on federally protected species. To be granted such an incidental take permit, the applicant must submit an HCP that offsets these impacts. DNR's purposes in pursuing this permit and HCP include the following:

- Manage habitat on state-owned aquatic lands to reduce risks and contribute to the recovery of listed species.
- Help ensure that authorized actions on state-owned aquatic lands comply with ESA.
- Protect the long-term interests of the public and state as landowners.
- Minimize the state's financial and legal liability relative to ESA.

Why are NMFS and USFWS requesting your input?

As a major federal action, issuance of an incidental take permit requires careful consideration and analysis in an EIS. Your involvement and input are essential to the EIS process. We encourage you to participate in a scoping meeting, submit comments, sign up for the mailing list, and review and comment on the draft EIS.

What EIS alternatives are NMFS and USFWS considering?

Alternative 1: No Action. DNR would continue managing and leasing state-owned aquatic lands in accordance with current practices, and no specific management strategies would be implemented to ensure compliance with the ESA.

Alternative 2: Proposed Action. DNR would develop an HCP, and NMFS and USFWS would issue incidental take permits authorizing covered activities in freshwater, marine, and estuarine environments, provided all legal requirements are met. A preliminary list of activities under consideration for coverage includes aquaculture of finfish and shellfish; complex, water-dependent activities (such as marinas, shipyards, and terminals); overwater structures; public access; log booming and storage; commercial sand and gravel removal; and small-scale mining.

Alternative 3: DNR would develop an HCP that is similar to Alternative 2, but covers only activities in marine and estuarine environments.

Please comment...

We are especially interested in hearing your input regarding the following:

- Information, issues, and concerns about the effects that any of the alternatives could have on the environment
- Other alternatives you think should be considered
- Potential adaptive management and/or monitoring provisions
- The current condition of the environment
- Ways to minimize effects on the environment and possible mitigation measures

Please submit your formal scoping comments by **December 11, 2006**. Comments will be accepted throughout the development of the EIS, however.

For more information about how to provide your input and where to learn more, please see the back of this brochure.



Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary

You have several options for providing input into EIS scoping:

- Attend a scoping meeting to ask questions and submit comments in person.
- Send comments to the following e-mail address:
WADNRAquaticlandsHCP.nwr@noaa.gov
Please include the document identifier in the subject line of the message:
Washington DNR Aquatics HCP EIS
- Complete the enclosed comment form or send a letter to either
Jo Ellen Henry or John Stadler at the following addresses:

Jo Ellen Henry, USFWS	John Stadler, NMFS
510 Desmond Dr SE, Suite 102	510 Desmond Drive SE, Suite 103
Lacey, WA 98503	Lacey, WA 98503
Fax (360) 753-9516	Fax (360) 753-9517

For more information on DNR's HCP proposal, visit
<http://www.dnr.wa.gov/htdocs/aqr/esa/index.html>.

If you have questions, you may also contact the following people:
Jo Ellen Henry, USFWS, (360) 753-7766 or
John Stadler, NMFS, (360) 753-9576



Please join us at a scoping meeting!

Spokane

Spokane Falls Community College	Tuesday
Student Union Bldg 17	October 24, 2006
3410 W Fort George Wright Dr.	7:00 to 9:30 pm

Ellensburg

Central Washington University	Wednesday
Student Union Bldg	October 25, 2006
400 E. University Way	7:00 to 9:30 pm

Bellingham

Bellingham Public Library	Wednesday
Main Branch	November 1, 2006
210 Central Ave	7:00 to 9:30 pm

Longview

Cowlitz County PUD Office	Tuesday
961 12th Ave	November 7, 2006
	7:00 to 9:30 pm

Seattle

NMFS Northwest Regional Office	Wednesday
Building 9	November 8, 2006
7600 Sand Point Way NE	7:00 to 9:30 pm

John Stadler
National Marine Fisheries Service
510 Desmond Dr. SE, Suite 102
Lacey, WA 98503

